

## First Reading: Revelation 7:9–17

<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup>and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup>And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

<sup>13</sup>Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" <sup>14</sup>I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

<sup>16</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.

<sup>17</sup> For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

## Epistle: 1 John 3:1–3

<sup>1</sup>See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

## Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:1–12

<sup>1</sup>Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

<sup>2</sup>And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

<sup>9</sup>"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

<sup>10</sup>"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."



All Saints' Day

**About the Cover:** The cathedral portal on the cover is filled with the imagery of Revelation; Christ is surrounded by the heavenly host: four living creatures (four Gospel accounts), the twelve apostles, angels, and the twenty-four elders (God's Old and New Testament people), with royalty on the columns. It could keep going out from there to include all of the saints who have gone before us in faith and await the resurrection. We saints who are still on this earth receive peace from heaven through Christ the Door (John 10:7), who has opened to us eternal life through His cross and resurrection.





St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)  
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254  
309-949-2516

November 3, 2024 All Saints' Day (observed)

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*Divine Service Setting One (Lutheran Service Book, pg. 151)*

Hymn of Invocation 672 Jerusalem the Golden

Invocation and Versicles (p. 151)

Psalm 149

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,  
his praise in the assembly of the godly!

<sup>2</sup>Let Israel be glad in his Maker;  
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

<sup>3</sup>Let them praise his name with dancing,  
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

<sup>4</sup>For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;  
he adorns the humble with salvation.

<sup>5</sup>Let the godly exult in glory;  
let them sing for joy on their beds.

<sup>6</sup>Let the high praises of God be in their throats  
and two-edged swords in their hands,

<sup>7</sup>to execute vengeance on the nations  
and punishments on the peoples,

<sup>8</sup>to bind their kings with chains  
and their nobles with fetters of iron,

<sup>9</sup>to execute on them the judgment written!  
This is honor for all his godly ones. Praise the LORD!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Kyrie (p. 152)

Hymn of Praise: *This Is the Feast* (p. 155)

Salutation and Collect (p. 156)

P Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable

joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen. (*sung*)

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Gradual

*Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5*

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Blessèd are those whose strength is in you,  
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Alleluia and Verse (Common, p. 156)

Hymn of the Day 677 For All the Saints

Sermon

Nicene Creed (p. 158)

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (insert)

Prayer of the Church

*After each petition:*

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

*The prayers conclude:*

P ...one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Presentation of the Offering

Offertory (p. 159)

Service of the Sacrament (p. 160)

*(Please see the Communion statement in the pew pads for receiving the Sacrament at St. John's.)*

Distribution Hymns

679 Oh, How Blest Are They

678 We Sing for All the Unsung Saints

673 Jerusalem, My Happy Home

Post-Communion Cantic: *Thank the Lord* (p. 164)

Hymn to Depart 667 Saints, See the Cloud of Witnesses

*Silent Prayer*

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## Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

P: Almighty God, in whose glorious presence live all who depart in the Lord, we give You hearty thanks for Your loving-kindness to all Your servants who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labors. We humbly implore Your mercy that we, together with all who have departed in saving faith, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in both body and soul in Your eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

P: In gratitude for Your saving grace, O blessed Trinity, we offer to You our praise as we commemorate the entry of our brothers and sisters in Christ into the heavenly glory of Your Church Triumphant, including Jim Dahl, Wanda Rahn, and all whom we remember in our hearts and minds who have died in saving faith, thereby entering into Your nearer presence through the blood of the Lamb, Christ Jesus our Lord.

May their life of faithfulness to Christ be an example to us, and may their entrance into heaven be a source of hope and joy for each of us as we continue our pilgrimage here through the valley of the shadow of death.

**C: May it be so. Amen!**

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, we remember with thanksgiving those who loved and served You in Your Church Militant on earth and who now rest from their labors. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joy of Your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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**C: Amen.**

**ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS**

churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org  
Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org  
https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo

**HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE  
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

**Rev. Timothy Nerud** **Pastor**  
815-989-2025 (Office) 612-940-8138 (Cell)

Elder: Aaron Raschke

Greeter: Janet Bertso

Videographers: Joel Werling, Nicole Nerud, or Heidi Nerud

**WE PRAY:** Gracious Father, who in Jesus Christ, Your Son, have opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe, we are indebted to You beyond words for Your grace and mercy in Jesus Christ, our Lord, under whom our loved ones whom You have taken to Yourself lived and through whom they have been given eternal life in the mansions You have made ready for Your holy people; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit are on God with dominion over us forever.. Amen

**WELCOME TO ALL!**

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

**OFFICE HOURS**

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday, please call ahead) 8 am—12 pm  
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)  
(Tuesday— Friday) please call ahead

**STREAM SERVICES** <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: [www.stjohnsgeneseo.org](http://www.stjohnsgeneseo.org).

**DAILY DEVOTIONS FROM LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES** - use this website ([www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)) to receive daily devotions sent to your email or phone. You never have to be without God's word.

*All bulletin announcements need to be in the Office by Wednesday mornings.*

**ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY**

Sunday school—5 Adult Bible Class—9 Worship—47

**OFFERING**

Offering last Sunday \$1,535.00  
Weekly giving needed per 2024 Budget \$4,481.54

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S**

Today	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Elders' meeting
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." Psalms 122:1*

**"With angels, archangels, and with all the company of heaven ..."** When we gather around the altar of the Lord in His house, we pray and praise God with "all the company of heaven." Those we have lost in the Lord are not truly lost to us — they have simply entered their rest with the Lord. As we gather to worship our Lord, we gather along with them. On the Last Day everything that God has given into the care of our stewardship will fade away — everything except our brothers and sisters in Christ. Caring for one another in love and grace is our highest calling.

**ATTENDANCE BOOK**—We ask everyone attending this morning to sign the red attendance book found at the end of each pew, then pass it back.

**THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS**—We are gathering pantry items for those in need. We currently have the names of 3 families. If you know of a family needing help, please contact the Office. We are for bring pantry items of food, paper products, cleaning supplies, etc. to create a 'Thanksgiving Box' for each family. Monetary gift are also welcomed. Bring your gifts by November 10th and place on the table outside the Office door. Thank You!!!!

**ROCK ISLAND CIRCUIT YOUTH** is gathering socks, hats , gloves, along with canned fruits and vegetables. Bring your gifts by November 10th and place them in the box outside the Office door.

**LIFE THOUGHTS**—Since God created humankind in His image, their fate belongs in His hands above Caesar's (Matthew 22:21). Life issues are more than just private or political—they are matters of the heart, to which the Gospel of Jesus Christ speaks most directly and effectively. They must remain part of the Church's conversation for the sake of people struggling with them. *Prayer: Almighty God, impart unto us ears that rejoice to hear Your whole counsel and tongues that proclaim it with courage and compassion. Amen.*

**DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS** contributions are now being devoted to necessary infrastructure at University Lutheran Church in Champaign (UniLu). New toilets will be installed in a men's room, and a new water heater installed for the building.

"Items like these seem far from glamorous," said CID Mission Executive Ken Schurb. "They do not capture our senses until problems arise in connection with them. Then their importance stands out." He added that plumbing as well as painting and many other such "background" elements help UniLu offer Christ in Word and Sacrament to University of Illinois students, faculty, and staff.

On October 24, CID President Michael Mohr declared complete the previous DFM project, which had been furnace replacements at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb. This project ended up requiring only about half of the \$25,000 originally set aside for it.

The Macomb furnace project was the last on the list approved by CID Board of Directors for this year. Under discretionary authority within guidelines that this board adopted for DFM, Pres. Mohr opened the current project to address known needs at UniLu.

For the third consecutive year, CID mission stations have been assembling a list of their projected repair and upgrades for the next 10 years. "The list makes it easy to look up needs at CID mission properties," Pres. Mohr said. District congregations will see the total updated list prior to next summer's CID convention. **Amount to be funded:\$5,000. Project:** Replace toilets in basement men's restroom and replace water heater at University Lutheran Church, Champaign

**ALTAR FLOWERS—The 2023 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms.** Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. **Please sign up for a Sunday.**

#### **PRAYER MINISTRY**

*Give thanks as you pray:*

**MISSION—***Thank God that He is our heavenly Father.* Rejoice that God invites us to believe that He is our true Father and we are His true children.

**ST JOHN'S—Mrs. Lindsey Gustafson—**We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Lindsey and Alex asking Your blessings upon them.

**ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—**O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

<b>Elizabeth Bjork</b>	<b>Paula Chapa</b>	<b>Joyce DeFauw</b>
<b>Betty Firch</b>	<b>Arlyn Helke</b>	<b>Jessica Johnson</b>
<b>Lynne Johnson</b>	<b>Linda Lundquist</b>	<b>Aaron Raschke</b>
<b>Drew Schillinger</b>	<b>Carolyn Wildermuth</b>	<b>Marilyn Woods</b>

#### **Dawn Daebelliehn**

**Brandon & Shaeli Streeks & family** (Adopted Seminarian)

**Jon/Anita Clausing** (missionaries in Kenya)

**Don Eggers** ( son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

**Jodi Martins** (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)

**Shandel Loenser**

**Paul Werner** (brother of Dan Werner)

**Ron Powell** (friend of Brad Gehn)

**Justin Rittenhouse** (grandson of John/Nancy Wickwire)

**Marty Cavato** (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)

**Ellen Bauer** (grandmother of Joel Werling)

**Don Lutz** (husband of an LWML friend of Liz Neumann)

**Carol Eggers** (friend of Marilyn Woods)

**Gary Kilstom** (friend of Brad Gehn)

**Kenneth Cullison** (son of Kevin and Stacie Rahn)

**Shirley Nerud** (mother of Pastor Nerud)

**MILITARY—**We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

**Mandy Davila** (daughter of Linda Aper)

**Luke/Nicole Thompson** (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

**Karl Flynn** (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

**Casey Powers Jr.** (step son of Lisa Powers)

**Brittany Loenser** (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

**Rylie Hallendorff** (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)

#### **LUTHERANS FOR LIFE**

““In the fullness of time, our Lord was born for our sake. In the fullness of time, He will bring all the faithful into eternal fellowship with Him. In the fullness of time, He will dry every tear and fulfill His will for all mankind, as John the Evangelist witnessed in the Revelation God granted him.” *Deaconess Bethany Stoeber, Director-at-Large, LFL of Kansas – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

**GENESEO INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM** invites you to participate in the Thanksgiving program November 27—December 1. Willing hosts will invite international college students into their homes for the Thanksgiving holiday. The guest will arrive in Geneseo by bus approximately 3:45 on Wednesday, November 27. They depart from Geneseo at 2 pm December 1. This is a wonderful opportunity to show the love of Christ to a stranger. For more details, contact the church office ASAP. Application deadline is November 11.

**THE COMMUNITY CHOIR** has been invited to sing at the Community Thanksgiving Service in the HS Fine Arts Commons on Sunday, November 24. Rehearsal begins at 3:00 in the HS Choir room and the service begins at 4:00 pm. We will sing “Hymn to Joy” (Community Choir sang this summer) and “Cantante Domino” by Althouse. Please reply to Pam Edwards (singplay53@gmail.com) by Nov. 6. All are welcome to join us.

All Saints' Day (observed)  
November 3, 2024  
Text: Revelation 7:9-17 (First Reading)  
Other Texts: 1 John 3:1-3 (Epistle); Matthew 5:1-12 (Gospel)

### **“The Glorious Hope of Heaven”**

Grace, mercy and peace be yours from God our Father through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As far back as my memories go, I've always known and believed that heaven is the place that true believers in Christ go when they die. And I have no doubt that you too know and believe this incredible hope that is *heaven*. So on this All Saints' Day as we remember those dear Christians who departed in faith, let us take some time to consider, yes, *heaven*.

To begin, let us recognize that Scripture refers to three distinct things with the word heaven: the sky/atmosphere, outer space, and the dwelling place of God, which is what we most commonly associate with the word. Perhaps this threefold use is why the Bible often speaks of the *heavens*, plural. St. Paul helps here when he writes that he was taken up to the third heaven, which he also refers to as *paradise*. So biblically, we correctly speak of the sky/atmosphere as the first heaven, outer space as the second heaven, and the dwelling of God, paradise, as the third heaven, which is what Jesus refers to when He assures the repentant robber, “Today you will be with me in *paradise*.” For He certainly wasn't referring to a reunion around Jupiter!

A second biblical distinction to keep in mind is heaven *before* Judgment Day and heaven *after* Judgment Day. To connect to our previous point, this heaven *before* Judgment Day *is* the third heaven, the paradise Paul was caught up into, to which Jesus promised to the robber who had a “death bed conversion,” and is what believers who have died *are currently experiencing* since all these are before our Lord returns in glory to Judge the living and the dead.

What can we confidently say about heaven *before* Judgment Day? Logically, we must quickly say something about what directly precedes entering heaven: bodily death. While recognizing that there are indicators that medical professionals use to determine if someone is alive or dead, these are only *indirect* measurements. For death is not merely the irreversible cessation of heartbeat or brain functions, *but is the separation of the soul from the body* which, of course, will cause those indicators that doctors rightly use. So what happens to the soul?

First, we must say that the concept of “soul sleep” is a false teaching. Based upon God's Word, the church father Tertullian wisely said, “Sleeping is an act of the body, not the soul.” Thus when the Bible refers to death as “sleep” or “falling asleep,” it is a reference

to the body which we “lay to rest” in the grave as it awaits being awakened. The soul, however, is not asleep but, having been judged, instantly begins the torments of hell if an unbeliever or, if a believer, experiencing heaven *before* Judgment Day, “*Today* you will be with me in paradise.”

So what can a soul experience without a body? Honestly, with this we are in a realm of mystery where the light of our reason cannot reach and so our imagination will too easily corrupt. As in all cases of divine mysteries, here too we must let the Word alone guide us, being thankful for everything God does reveal to us even as we dare not depart from it in speculation, whether in pride of our thinking or feelings, or in ingratitude over His not revealing more.

So again, what can be said about what a believer’s bodiless soul experiences in heaven? First, their sinful nature is finally gone, so the battle against the old Adam is finally over. That alone is a great blessing indeed! But more, let’s hear what St. Paul has written, “We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord,” and again, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” and again, “My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.” In Jesus’ parable, the angels took poor Lazarus to Abraham’s side where he was *comforted*, his suffering over to never be experienced again. And just consider the word used for heaven before Judgment Day, *paradise*, which obviously indicates peace and joy being the “new normal.”

As to how much these blessed souls are aware of, we can say very little. It is true that John hears the souls of the martyrs crying out in heaven, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” However, those words do not actually indicate that they are aware of what’s happening on earth, but are more of a cry of vindication. At most, it seems that they may recognize some level of the passing of time at least to the extent of knowing that Judgment Day has not yet come. But beyond that, we must be silent and instead of hoping that our dead loved ones are looking over us, be thankful instead that the One who looked over them and saved them is also looking over us, Christ Jesus!

Finally, while not often considered, perhaps the greatest comfort concerning those in heaven is that *they can never lose salvation*, as sin and Satan can no longer touch them. Being in heaven *before* Judgment Day means that you *will be* in heaven *after* Judgment Day. And to that we now turn our attention.

When our Lord returns on the Last Day, all the dead will have their bodies raised, “some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” It is believers in Christ Jesus who will rise to everlasting life. It is of their bodies that it is written, “It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” For only believers have the promise that Jesus “will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.” And believers alone have the promise that the Lord will create a world for them that is fully capable of bringing all the blessings that He promises to them.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

Truly, when the Bible speaks about the joys and glories of heaven that await us, it is primarily the new creation of which it speaks. For consider Jesus’ words which we regularly use at a Christian funeral, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” It is when Jesus *comes again* on the Last Day that He will take us into the fullness of the place prepared for us, the place that is truly heaven since God Himself comes down and dwells visibly among us, no longer hidden behind means, for our purified, sinless, glorified resurrected eyes will be able to see Him in His glory, as the one who sees him no longer will die, but will instead enjoy the fullness of life in the Holy Spirit.

After the greatest blessing of seeing God and being in His full presence, heaven after Judgment Day will be enjoying the plethora of God’s continual, unfolding blessings that we will experience with both a soul and body that will be able to receive them in their fullest. All evils gone, all effects of evil gone, only that which is good forevermore. And we will not be alone, but as we bask in God’s presence we will also enjoy the presence of the angelic beings and that great multitude that no one could count of which St. John was given a “sneak peak.” Here is the great reunion with our believing loved ones for which we long; the opportunity to see them, hear them, speak to them, touch them with our resurrected eyes, ears, tongues, and hands.

Whatever the specifics may be, we will finally be home in our Heavenly Father’s house along with all our brothers and sisters in the faith from Adam and Eve to the last of the elect on earth. And best of all, we never have to leave this home, the feast at its table never ends, no goodbyes will need to be said anymore. Only newfound experiences and joys as we serve God as holy priests, fully loving one another as we were created to, even as we experience the fullness of love and community that God always intended, of which marriage, family, and church here on earth are but hints. Blessed hints, absolutely; yet only but hints of what is to come.

Today, All Saints’ Day, is one especially filled with comfort and hope for you regarding your loved ones who died in the faith, and for when you face death yourself. It is comfort and hope because the Lamb of God has opened heaven for you by His life, death, and resurrection in your place. You wash your robes white in the Lamb’s blood as you live the new life of faith given in your Baptism, repenting of your sins, confessing them, and



receiving forgiveness as you hear and believe His Gospel that comes to you in the Word, Absolution, and Holy Communion.

Faith is easy, for we trust in Christ who did it all. Being faithful is anything but easy. We are called to purify ourselves: the pain of rooting out sin, growing in righteousness, and suffering for such at the hands of the devil and the world. But have no doubt, it is worth the pain, the mocking, the bearing of the cross, even dying, for we follow our Savior who suffered all that for us, being increasingly conformed to His likeness, which then helps us in our battle against sin and our enemies, and assures us we are on the path of everlasting life of heaven before, and especially after, Judgment Day, something so incredible that St. Paul says, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” And not only does the Word assure us that it is worth the tribulation we endure, it even promises God will bring us through them, that no one will be able to snatch us out of the nail-scarred hands of our Shepherd Jesus nor His Father.

Dear saints, run the marathon, fight the good fight, travel the hard path, strive to enter through the narrow gate. Do this through repentance and faith, being tested by suffering and proven genuine by a holy life. Do this confident that heaven, the home of the Triune God, both before and after Judgment Day, is *your* home. There you will be vindicated against your enemies, rest from your pains, labors, and fights, and receive the victor’s crown. All because of Jesus, crucified and risen, whose name we praise now on earth, and forever in heaven. Amen!

**All Saints' Day (observed)**  
**3 November 2024**

**Collect of the Day**

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Prayer of the Church—Responsive Form**

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Heavenly Father, grant us diligence in learning Your Word and courage to speak Your name before the world. As we follow in Your ways, give us hearts to welcome strangers in Your name and to care for those who are new to the faith. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember Your Church, O Lord. Preserve her unconquerable until the day of Christ's return. Grant her boldness to proclaim the full counsel of Your Word. Send faithful pastors to preach Your Word and administer Your Means of Grace, and bless all Christians with zeal to profess the hope that is in them. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, our Father, You have set apart a people for Yourself and washed them in the blood of the Lamb to be Your own. Restore us daily through repentance and forgiveness, renewing our hearts and minds that we, guided and empowered by Your Word and Holy Spirit, may purify ourselves in holiness, righteousness and faithfulness. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we know Your deep love for us, for You have called us Your children. Deepen the love of children for their parents, and parents for their children. Strengthen fathers and mothers in their vocations, that they may raise their children in the way that they should go. Hear the prayers of those who long for families. Sustain all expectant mothers and their little ones. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Father, remember all civil authorities in Your kindness, and give them wisdom, courage and integrity. Mercifully preserve our nation as we prepare for elections and grant a legal and peaceful transition no matter the outcome. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, be near to the sick, the aged and infirm, the dying, the grieving, and all the afflicted, especially Ellen, Elizabeth, Marty, Paula, Kenneth, Dawn, Joyce, Carol,

Don, Betty, Arlyn, Jessica, Lynne, Gary, Shandel, Linda, Don, Jodi, Shirley, Ron, Aaron, Justin, Drew, Paul, Carolyn, and Marilyn. Grant healing according to Your will, and comfort them with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, remember Alex and Lindsey Gustafson. Bless them in body and soul with all things needful for this life and eternity. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.** Holy Lord, gather us in the blessed Sacrament around the Lamb of God, for He has taken away the sin of the world and so unites us in worship with saints, angels, and all the company of Heaven gathered around Your eternal throne. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

#### **Presentation of the Offering**

Lord, help us believe Your Word, which promises to reward our giving with blessings that overflow. In Your mercy, forgive us for our selfishness which would hold onto that which we should return unto You and for not trusting You as we should which causes us to fail to give what we truly are able. Fill us with Your grace that our giving will demonstrate the love we profess for Christ Jesus, who loved us and gave Himself unto death for our sins that we might be declared righteous and so be counted as saints now and forever in heaven. In His precious name we pray. Amen.